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have they for their work, he said, that designs are never used twice.

Such testimony is all of a piece with that coming from such distinguished London architects as Sir T. Jackson and Mr. R. C. Lethaby. So we see the finest Oriental art and the most recent movement of thought are in harmony with what can be observed in ancient art.

The Art of Auguste Rodin: C. R. MOREY, *Princeton*.

This paper aims at no comprehensive estimate or analysis of Rodin's art, but has a very limited purpose, namely to show that the great sculptor who has lately died is a landmark in the history of art because he modernized the statue, and particularly to make clear if I can just what this "modernizing" means.

If we attempt a definition of the word by its opposite, we find that "ancient," as the antonym of "modern" pretty well describes the quality of nineteenth century sculpture before its transformation at the hands of Rodin. It was antiquated, out of date, and out of touch with modern life. In this it made a remarkable contrast to painting, which reflected every movement of nineteenth century thought, and sometimes seemed the only true expression of certain of its phases. Sculpture on the other hand lagged behind its sister art so far that the two became divorced to an extent unparalleled in history. Painting kept up with the growing complexity of modern thought and feeling by a constantly increasing subtlety of expression; sculpture nursed its limitations, fed itself upon tradition, and spent its powers in mere decoration.

The chief cause for this lies, I think, in the fact that painting is essentially a modern art, while sculpture labored always under the incubus of the classic. Ancient painting, as such, had no influence at all upon the modern; but ancient sculpture has time and again interposed its counsels of perfection between the modern sculptor and the world which it was his function to interpret.

From the sixteenth century on, sculptors have been taught, in one way or another, directly or indirectly to

imitate the classic, and have tried in vain to say modern things in a dead language. Such imitation was stifling in the first place because it set up an inflexible ideal for imitation, an established norm which, based as it was upon a dead and not a living art, was incapable of change to suit the evolution of the modern mind. In the second place it hampered expression because classic art was by its very nature incapable of expressing modernity.

For consider for a moment the character of Greek art. It never, save for the brief moment of its Roman phase, touched the individual in the modern sense. We search Greek art in vain for real portraits; the strong sense of personal environment, the indispensable modern accompaniment to the figure, is lacking to Greek sculpture. Greek figures for instance, are never conceived in a particular time and place, but are thought of ideally as types and not as individuals. Hence the insistent abstract character of the Greek background in relief and even in painting. It is not that Greek art lacked expression, but it expressed the type, and hence is cold to those who seek in it the personal note of pain or passion, the reaction to one's own environment which we moderns feel so keenly. Compare for instance, the Doryphoros with Rodin's John the Baptist; (Plate V) the Greek youth moves serenely dominant over a material world that is neither sensed by him nor us; the modern figure is personal even to its gait; the form is wiry; the skin is leathery; the torso is bent:—in these things we read experience and struggle, the wear and tear of circumstance.

Starting with its classic prepossession, modern sculpture in its first phase of the Renaissance tried to force the ancient figures into modern expression by deliberately breaking the classic rhythm, and distorting the classic forms and proportions, and thus evolved the Michelangelesque. Later on, the experiment was tried of putting them in movement, which resulted in the Baroque. And all the while the lesser men recoiled before the effort, contenting themselves with variations on the classic themes with a view to decorative effect alone. This presently evolved a false and deadly con-

ception of the classic which has never been entirely shaken off,—namely the theory of Winckelmann and the Neo-classics:—that Greek art was not in principle expressive but decorative, i. e. strove to realize in the figure not character or significance, but the embodiment of preconceived ideas of abstract beauty.

This notion did not last long enough in painting to do much harm, but the sculpture of the nineteenth century took a long time to get over it. The sculpture of our own country has been mostly neo-classic, from Powers and his Greek Slave to Rinehart, and the curiously empty figures which Story has left in the Metropolitan. And even when the Neo-classic passed, it left behind it a strong impress upon the academic sculpture of France and the rest of the world. For one thing, it established the notion that the aim of sculpture should be decoration, and encouraged the use of pure symbolism to express what ought to have been expressed by the figures themselves. It also effectively cut off the sculptor from direct observation of nature, save in the portrait bust, and substituted for naturalism the cut and dried formulas of the school.

The Romantic movement swept away the neo-classic absurdities in painting, and even succeeded in stopping the direct copying of the classic in sculpture, at least in France, which from that time regained the leadership which it had lost for a time during the hero-worship accorded to Canova. One can see the new leaven troubling the art of Rude; his *Departure for War* adheres in all its accessory properties to the old Neo-Classic paraphernalia, but there is spontaneity in the yell let out by the Bellona overhead, and no Greek would even have observed so well the progressive movement of a group. Such work was in Rude's time still regarded as queer; the Academics dismissed it as being too expressive. These gentlemen, forced to make concessions to the wave of naturalism which swept over literature and painting in the wake of the Romantic movement, clung still to their ingrained habit of imitation, and merely transferred their devotion from the classic itself to the pseudo-classic of the Italian Renaissance. Dubois' "*Saint John*" is as nearly fifteenth

century in conception as modern sophistication can make it; Saint-Marceaux' "Genius guarding the Secret of the Tomb" gives us merely a decorative application of one of Michelangelo's mighty nudes of the Sistine ceiling.

As the demand for realism grew more insistent, the modern shifted ground once more, and enthroned the new divinity who reigns still in two-thirds of the studios of the world,—the posed model. Imitating this with all the resources of a really brilliant technique, the French and other sculptors who were trained in the school of Jouffroy and Falguière,—including most of our Americans of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, laid claim to the title of realists, when as a matter of fact they were simply recasting nature in time-honored classic forms; the models must perforce assume the attitudes of Dianas, Venuses, and Psyches, or Mercuries and Apollos, for with all the truth of objective modelling which this sculpture shows, its purpose is not expression, to say nothing of modern expression, but still the decorative ideal which was supposed to be "Greek."

Such works as Falguière's "Diana" are tantalizing; the wealth of analysis lavished upon the forms makes one think that the figure *must* mean something; and yet it does not,—the net impression is of skill, and of the brutal exactness of the body. A similar effect is seen in Jouffroy's "Girl confiding her Secret to Venus," save that here the faithful copying of the model receives greater emphasis by its contrast with the severity of the herm. When these men had anything to say, they said it in the old neo-classic way by symbolism and the allegorical figure. Such language is of course pure rhetoric; judged as such, there is probably no superior in sculpture to the *Gloria Victis* of Merciè. The technique is perfect; one never doubts the equilibrium of the strong winged figure. But the net effect is not one of truth, but of beauty; the sculptor has at most achieved as Brownell says, an exquisite phrase.

Of course the men I have mentioned are the Academics; there were also the others who revolted against the decorative shibboleth, and refused to believe that

copying a posed model was the same as studying nature. There was Carpeaux, whose lovely figures express a movement that is spontaneous and real, albeit general in character; there was Rude, whose aim was always significance; there was Barye, who introduced the novel notion that animals do not think and act like men. All these defied the universal standard of decorative taste defended by the Academics, and all had their ears boxed for their pains: a Parisian partisan of the Academic school spilled a bottle of ink over Carpeaux's "Dance;" Rude was robbed of the larger part of the decoration of the *Arc de Triomphe*; and Barye lived without honor until the very end of his career. The Academics got the commissions; while men like the three I have mentioned constituted a small minority in opposition, keeping alive a spirit of revolt that presently reappeared, invested with the brilliant genius of Auguste Rodin.

Rodin, Heaven knows, also had his troubles with the Academy. His first offering, the "Man with the Broken Nose," was rejected by the Salon, and when in 1877 he exhibited his "Age of Bronze," some of the Committee who awarded it a third-class medal seriously accused the artist of having taken a cast from life. It is no wonder that the figure awakened suspicions at that time, for no modelling like this had ever been seen in sculpture. One was familiar with the generalized surfaces of the classic figures, the elegant refinement thereof contributed by the Renaissance, and the unruffled smoothness of the Neo-classic, but no one had ever seen in a statue before this minute particularity of surface, save in the animals of Barye, from whom Rodin learned it.

The statue made the sculptor's reputation. In 1880 he received the commission for the portal of the projected *Palais des Arts décoratifs*, and the figures for this portal have suggested a good half of the best known of his works. In accordance with his pessimistic temperament, he conceived the portal as a Gate of Hell, and filled it with the tortured forms of human suffering, over whom, at the top of the door, brooded the figure of the Thinker.

In the Age of Bronze we see the sculptor in the process of perfecting his laborious technique; in the Thinker he is master of it, and has begun to realize, but not fully to employ, its tremendous powers of expression. The conception of the statue may well derive from Carpeaux's *Ugolino*, which Carpeaux drew in turn from a well-known figure of a lost soul in Michelangelo's Last Judgment. In any case the reminiscence of the great Florentine is in the figure; there is the same compactness whereby both sculptors aim to include the ruggedness of the material in the force of the final effect.

The *Penseur*, (Plate VI) in my opinion, is not destined to live as the masterpiece of Rodin; it is too early. Exhibited first in plaster in 1889, it belongs to those works wherein his technique was feeling its way toward a really modern expression, and the ideal concept which he has in mind only emphasizes the powerful modelling, instead of subordinating it to the theme. Compare for example the ease with which we translate the muscularity of Michelangelo's Moses into terms of intellect; in contrast to this the net impression of Rodin's figure is physical.

About 1890 there appeared a small bronze figure of an old woman, (Plate VII) a piece of human wreckage who applied at Rodin's door for help, and was induced to sit for him. "Sitting" to Rodin was far from being the arbitrary pose exacted by the Academics. The model assumed a random attitude; if this took on significance in the master's eye a sketch was made and the work begun. The poor creature is significant enough; every facet of the sharply modelled body is a merciless revelation of decay. But it is a significance more of the flesh than of the spirit, and very concrete; the larger human tragedy of the lost beauty and the helpless ugliness of age is lost in the master's realism.

These works,—the Age of Bronze, the Thinker, the Helmet-maker's Wife, are thus experiments in rendering, the gradual perfection of a technique of realism which at length developed an uncanny power to evoke

the illusion of life. The most direct means of forcing this illusion in sculpture is movement, and Rodin also resorts to this, but with the important difference that his figures do not move, but cause the eye of the observer to do so by the microscopic modulation of their surfaces.

Here we have the fundamental principle of his sculpture, that life is expressed not primarily in the attitude or the gesture or the head, but by the infinitesimal mobile facets of the flesh. The Greeks had used the principle, but since they seldom visualized the figure as a specific individual, the flesh of their statues lacked complexity and never went beyond the broad simplicity of the type. But the essence of modern life is complexity; we see the universal only in a thousand and one particulars, and generalization which does not build upon the concrete carries no conviction to the modern eye.

It is obvious then, that generalized modelling, whether based upon the typical forms of classic and neo-classic sculpture, or upon the frozen formula of the posed model, will not express modern life as we know it. In Rodin's figures, on the other hand, the "minute fluidity of form" surprises the life we know in the very act of being. The same is true of posture. Greek figures have a poise and balance, a rhythmic flow of action, that expressed to the ancients their typical conception of humanity; viewed in the abstract the world becomes an ordered organism, harmonious and all in tune. This classic rhythm has descended to modern sculpture in its imitation of the Greek as the embodiment of an ideal of decorative beauty, mistakenly supposed to be classic. But life to us is not as with the Greeks; it is filled with discords and unbalanced emphases, whose jarring notes compose indeed an ultimate harmony, but one that is vastly more complicated and poignant than that which emanates from the marbles of the Parthenon.

The achievement of this modern harmony in art is very difficult, and it is interesting to see the characteristic way in which Rodin, in his next and best phase, lifts his earlier realism to a universal plane. We can

cite no better example than the Kiss, (Plate VIII) originally meant for a group of Paolo and Francesca, and to decorate the *Porte d'Enfer*. Here Rodin strikes the abstract note by simply obliterating the head; he does not merely throw the features out of focus, as did Michelangelo, but envelops them in the mystery of shadow. The male's passion speaks incisively from the toe that grips the rock, and the convulsive rigidity of the back; from the other view it is rendered by a deliberate differentiation of the hands. Here we have the indispensable modern note of the concrete, the innumerable characteristic half-tones that make up individuality, whose cumulative effect invests with tremendous power the ideal content which finally emerges from the group. Decorative considerations, in view of the poignant reality of the figures, are as out of place as they would be in a gripping scene of real life on the stage.

The rough stone marks another modern note in Rodin's art,—his dislike for the pedestal. He surrounds his figures always with the illusion of locality; in his two statues of painters, of Claude Lorraine and Bastien Lepage, he defied the critics and insisted on representing the artists as if they had climbed upon the pedestal to get a good view of the surrounding country. In the same way he fought to have the group of the Burghers of Calais placed on the pavement in front of the *Hôtel de Ville*, as if they were in reality crossing the square on their way to the English camp.

The Burghers were set up in 1895. From this time we may trace a decline in Rodin's art, and it is doubtful if we can find anything he did afterwards which will approach the Kiss. It was in the nineties that his reputation became world-wide, and his studio the gathering place of journalists and art-philosophers. The sculptor turned into a talker, and began to theorize concerning sculpture, and presently we see his theories paraded in his work. Naturally a man of sensuous temperament, mystic and not intellectual, he seems to have assumed the role of "*penseur*," and began to shadow forth his primitive philosophy in a series of allegorical works. The first of these have still the sensitive

beauty of the Kiss,—we may include in this number the Caryatid, and the Danaïd (Plate IX), and we feel again the gripping underlying fact of existence in the lovely head of Thought. In this work,—which by the way is said to have been finished by Bourdelle, his pupil, the master's philosophy is still instinctive and his symbolism is natural, not artificial. But presently he loses clearness,—his ideas seem to be translations into marble of the epigrams which flowed so constantly from his lips: "Geometry is at the bottom of expression," "There is no ugliness in nature save a lie" etc. etc.,—and we get such allegories as the Hand of God, the Daughter of Icarus, and the Body and Soul, which was conceived as a centaur struggling to free his human part from his horse's body. This subjective phase of Rodin's art reached its climax finally in the statue of Balzac (Plate X), exhibited in 1898, and refused by the *Société des Gens des Lettres* which had commissioned it.

They were undoubtedly right in my opinion in their refusal to accept the statue, and also in their criticism that it lacked style, wherein they touched upon the dangerous influence which such personal art might have, and has had, upon the sculpture of the next generation. The two things are one, for style is after all only the language which artists speak, and personal style or manner the accent with which each individual craftsman employs this speech. The language of art grows by enrichment with new words and phrases, and grow it must if it is not to be relegated to the classics, but if an artist insists upon substituting personal dialect for this speech, he must rest content with being intelligible only to himself. There may come a time, and doubtless will come a time, when it will not seem *outré* to represent a great novelist as a huge comic mask crowning a bathrobe, but even at the present day this statue impresses one as slang.

It would be interesting to trace the effect of this later phase of Rodin's art upon his followers, and to see how his relapse into theory produced a series of mannerists like those who followed in the steps of Michelangelo. Only one of his pupils, Bourdelle, has chosen to follow the really vital element in the master's art,

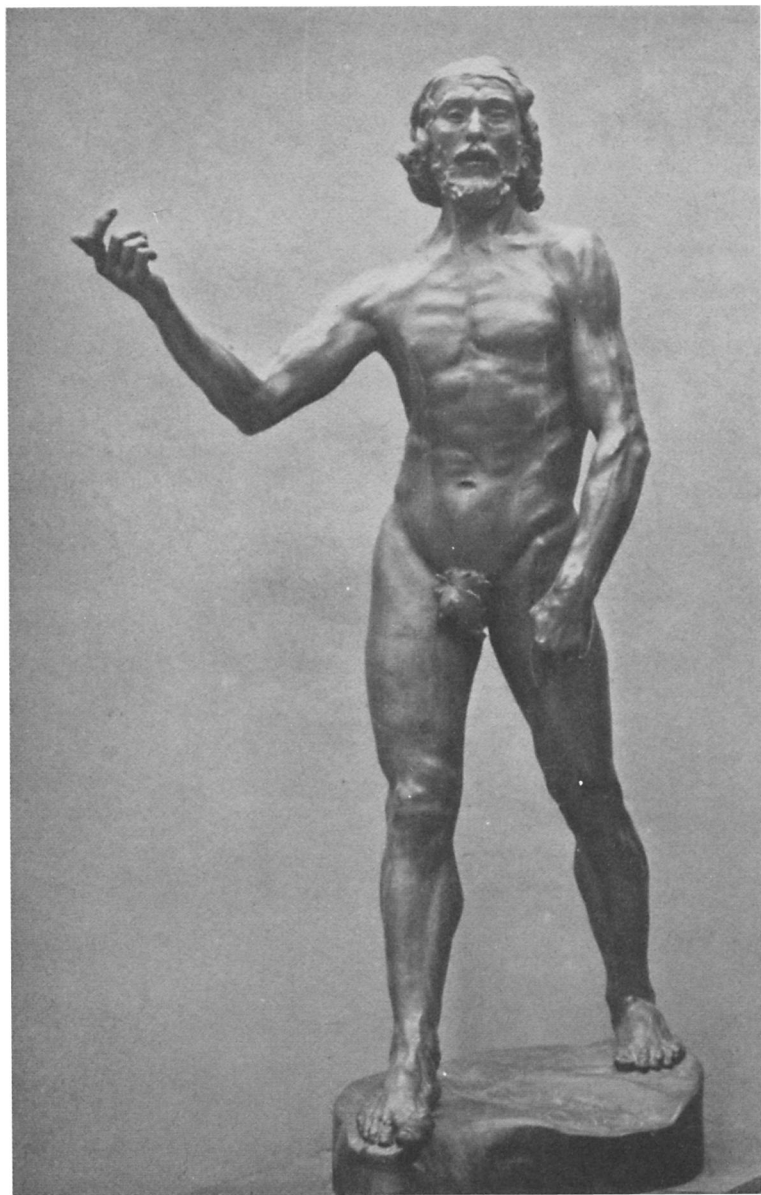
and developed his modelling into a vehicle of extraordinary force. In Bourdelle's hand the forms become almost explosive,—witness the throbbing head of Beethoven in the Luxemburg and the Hercules that is now in private possession in Paris. Others like Rosso have turned sculpture into a thing of light and shadow alone; still others have taken seriously that epigram about geometry and gone to swell the ranks of the little cubists; in short the succeeding generation has shown the disintegration which naturally followed the downfall of the academic tradition. The master succeeded in destroying the citadel of classicism; it is a question whether the modern edifice which shall replace it has been begun.

In any case the future of sculpture will be determined largely by the influence of Rodin. He has taught us that the limitations of the statue do not preclude its being expressive without the aid of symbolism; he has also awakened us to the fact that expression after all is just as much the main business of sculpture as of painting. He has broken down the artificial barrier which the academics raised between painting and sculpture, and added to the modelled surface the chiaroscuro which trebles its expressive power. Sculpture, to quote Rodin, is a thing of hollows and lumps, of light and shade. Lastly, he has brought to the aid of the modern sculptor a technique of analysis of surface, whereby the body and not the face becomes again the chief medium of expression, and no longer serves the limited ends of decoration alone, nor is forced into movement and exaggeration in order to convey its thought and feeling, but reveals in a thousand and one details the inner life that belies the bronze or marble.

Committee Reports.

The Committee on Publication reviewed the possibilities of a periodical as the organ of the Association and recommended that the proceedings of the Association be published in a Bulletin as in former years. The following resolution was adopted:

Resolved that the matter of propaganda and a periodical for the Association be referred to the President and the Committee.



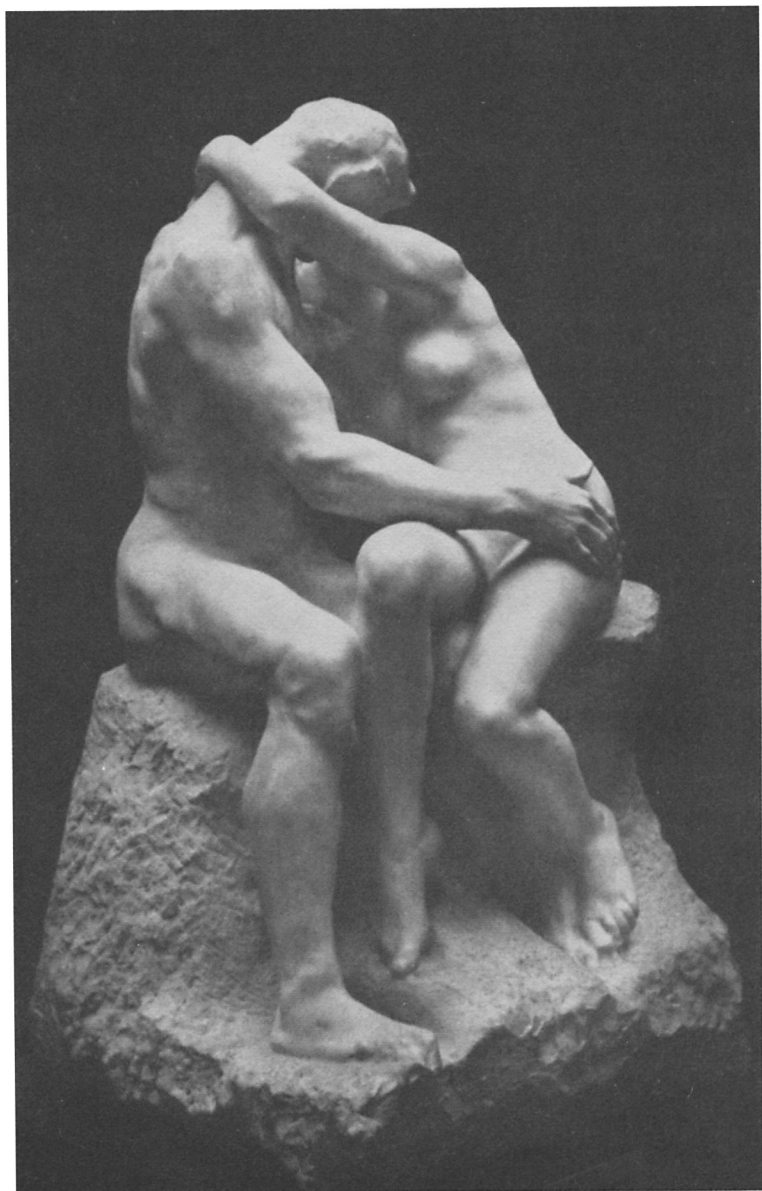
JOHN THE BAPTIST, by Auguste Rodin.



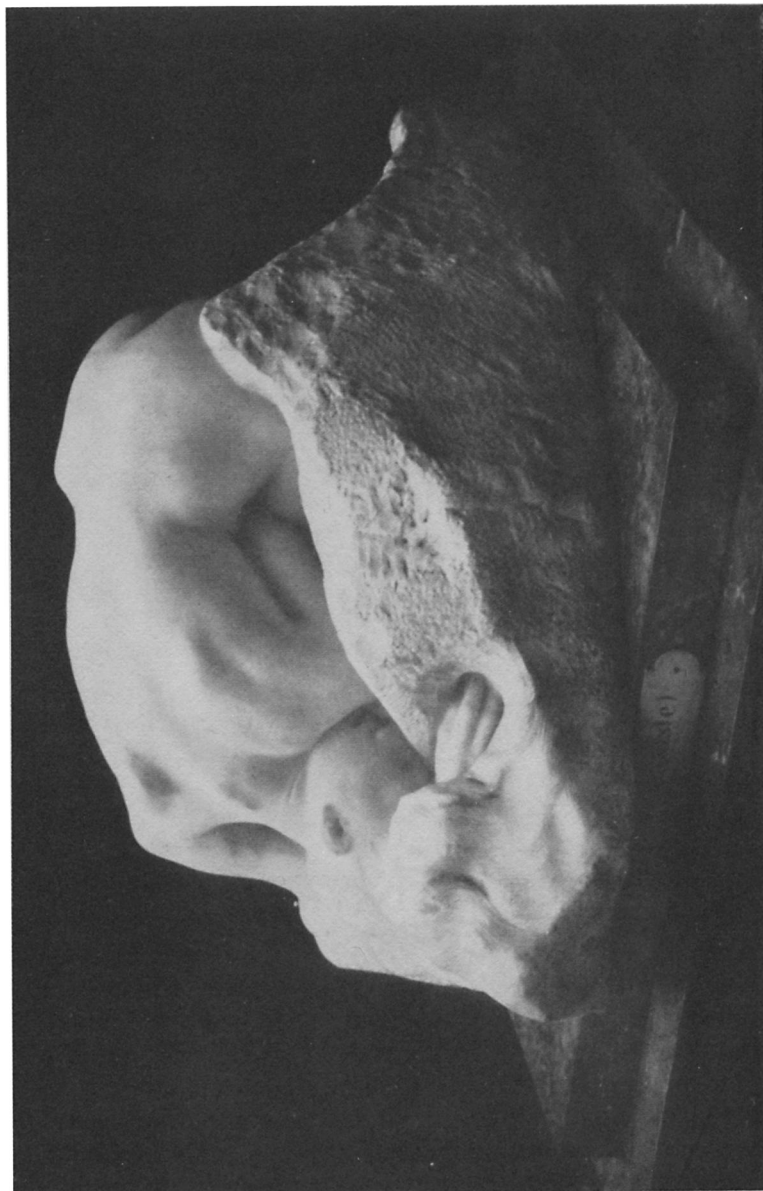
LE PENSEUR, by Auguste Rodin



OLD WOMAN (Heaulmière) by Auguste Rodin



THE KISS, by Auguste Rodin.



DANAÏD, by Auguste Rodin



BALZAC, by Auguste Rodin.